1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12



177 place of frequent mobility. Stoves, blankets, candles, and matches became standard household equipment. New and better tools, including the hammer, saw, steel knife, ax, and nail, permitted the construction of the more permanent dwellings and of tables and raised beds of hewed lumber. These tools, plus the drill, also facilitated the construction of the snowshoe, toboggan, and plank boat. The ax became indispensable for cutting wood to use in stoves. Clothing came to be prepared of wool and cotton cloth, superior to moosehide in warmth, and sewing became less tedious through the use of steel needles, cotton thread, and, finally, sewing machines. River travel and transportation was facilitated by the outboard motor, while the overland transportation grew easier when horses were introduced by the gold seekers. Deadfalls were displaced for trapping fur-bearing mammals by spring traps. Native cordage was abandoned in favor of rope and thread. Tanned skin is used largely for moccasins and mittens. The bow and arrow, stone knife, stone points, and lance ceased to be manufactured. Bone and tooth ornaments were replaced by glass and metal jewelry; native face paints by cosmetics. Tattooing also disappeared.

Following acceptance of many adaptive techniques and resources from western culture, the Kaska became highly dependent upon these innovations. Today river travel without the convenience of an outboard engine is almost unthinkable; sewing is often postponed until a sewing machine can be obtained; hunting is impossible without a gun. This dependence upon recently acquired technical processes complements the previously discussed absence of any idealization of previous patterns of adaptation.

177 191 In the adjustive sphere of the culture the important introductions of white men included a new language—English—with its system of numeration and of ordering time and weights; a new religion, Christianity, and a new system of social control.[46] The Kaska were also faced with the necessity of adjusting to a new ethnic group, the whites. While the native language continued to be spoken within the society, other adjustive patterns dropped out, such as belief in many native supernaturals as well as many avoidances and 177 taboos. Shamans ceased to be the curers of the society. Warfare stopped, and people became subject to the system of institutionalized justice introduced by the government. After the arrival of resident Catholic missionaries nuptials began to be celebrated with religious rites and many marriages acquired a legally binding character. In local summer schools, priests started to give Kaska children elementary training in reading and writing; a few older boys and girls were sent to boarding schools located outside of the Cassiar. New patterns of amusement were introduced, including listening to recorded music, face-to-face ballroom •[207] dancing, and poker. More recently the radio has become a popular instrument, while the United States Army permitted a number of young people to see occasional motion pictures.

177 622 The early traders tried to institute some degree of government among the Indians in order to improve the collection of fur. They appointed "chiefs," whose main duty was to stimulate energetic trapping. To enhance their status, some chiefs received certain distinc-

[46] The French language never developed in the Cassiar as it did in the Mackenzie Basin. Contact with the French was restricted to the eastern fringes of the Kaska. Once the Cassiar was thoroughly penetrated (about 1870), the day of these traders was over and the Hudson's Bay Company was using English and Scotch representatives. Missionary influence was also late; when the French-Catholic Oblates arrived they readily accepted English as the second language of the people.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12



bunk, besides a cook stove and an airtight heater. In Lower Post, houses often contain single cots acquired from construction camps along the Alaska Highway. At least one family in each settlement usually owns a radio which is not, however, always in working order. Shelves consist of wooden packing boxes nailed with their backs to the log walls. Food, clothing, and other equipment is piled on the floor, stored under bunks, or suspended from poles stretching across the width of a cabin.

Away from Lower Post practically all furniture is locally manufactured out of hand hewed poplar or whipsawed spruce. Besides benches, spruce tree sections, ten or twelve inches in diameter and eighteen inches high, also serve as seats.

A cabin or camp often presents an untidy picture of a great many articles stored in any available space. Old Kean's tent frame presented an extreme picture of disorder. Here the tables were littered with tins of jam, butter, syrup, half used packages of macaroni, and other food left over from several meals. Food was stored under the tables and even in the center of the floor. The bunks were piled with guns, clothing, tarps, and miscellaneous objects.

Griffin has described the interior and furnishings of one of the older cabins in Lower Post (perhaps Mrs. Dickson's house) as he saw it during April 1943. " . . . we go into one of the cabins, stooping to pass the low doorway and straining our eyes in the dim light. Beyond a bed in one corner and a stove in another there is little in the place. The woman sitting on the bed regards us apathetically, but the eyes of the boy beside her are bright and full of curiosity. Two men are bent over some pelts laid out on the floor, marten and lynx. Hudson asks them what the trapping was like this winter and one of them replies laconically, "No good. Too cold."[7]

In summer, bedding consists of a single sleeping bag or a pair of heavy woolen blankets. In winter a second sleeping bag may be used or additional blankets. Bunks are sometimes covered with dry grass. Some families have acquired single size camp mattresses from construction camps. In daytime, when people sleep on the ground in cabins or tents, the bedding is rolled into a huge roll and stored in the rear of the dwelling where it becomes a backrest for the occupants.

In winter, spruce brush is laid in front of the entrance to a cabin or tent frame, or a burlap bag is thrown immediately inside the door of a house. Here a person scrapes the snow from his moccasins before the warmth of the building causes the melting snow to wet his footwear.

Cabins with floors are swept every day or so with a broom. New brush is laid in tents and floorless cabins about once every two weeks, the old branches being discarded. Every fall cabins are rechinked where necessary and additional sod may be piled on the shallow spots of a dirt roof. Heavy snow is removed from the roof of a sod cabin and from the tops of tents. Cleaning and chinking are done by women, while a man keeps the roof in repair. If tents burn or otherwise become damaged, a woman takes down the shelter and sews a new piece of canvas into the damaged area.

Mice are household pests. Dwellings often contain mousetraps, most of which are of native manufacture. To make a mousetrap, a man takes a piece of wood, fifteen inches long,

[7] Griffin, *Alaska and the Canadian Northwest* (1944), 127.